

Message Text

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ACTION OES-06

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 NEA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 EPA-01 AID-05
FEA-01 CEQ-01 CIAE-00 ERDA-05 COME-00 DODE-00
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E. O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SENV, UNEP
SUBJ: UN CONFERENCE ON DESERTIFICATION, REGIONAL PRE-
PARATORY MEETING FOR AFRICA SOUTH OF THE SAHARA,
NAIROBI, APRIL 12-16, 1977

REF: (A) STATE 78912, (B) STATE 77343 (NOTAL)

1. THE AFRICA SOUTH OF THE SAHARA REGIONAL PREPARATORY
MEETING ON DESERTIFICATION WHICH MET IN NAIROBI APRIL 12-16
CLEARLY MANIFESTED CONCERN OF AFRICAN COUNTRIES WITH THE
PROBLEMS OF DESERTIFICATION AND THEIR DETERMINATION TO SEE
REMEDIAL ACTION CONTINUED AND ACCELERATED. THERE WAS A
HIGH LEVEL OF EXPERTISE PRESENT. COUNTRY PAPERS WERE SUB-
MITTED BY GHANA, BOTSWANA, NIGERIA, KENYA, SUDAN, SOMALIA,
UPPER VOLTA, UGANDA, MALI, UNITED REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON,
ETHIOPIA, BENIN, CHAD AND EGYPT (COPIES WILL BE POUCHED TO
OES/ENP/EN). WHILE THERE WERE MANY REFERENCES TO THE
SITUATION IN THE SAHEL, THERE WAS A MINIMUM OF IDENTIFICA-
TION OF SPECIFIC PROGRAMS BEING CARRIED OUT IN THAT REGION
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AND SIMILARLY THE LACK OF IDENTIFICATION OF OTHER SPECIFIC
PROJECTS WHICH MIGHT BE IDENTIFIED IN THE FUTURE. THE
REPRESENTATIVE OF CLISS MADE THE STATEMENT, HOWEVER, THAT
USAID HAD PROVIDED SOME \$25 MILLION IN SHORT TERM RECOVERY
PROGRAMS AND WAS IN THE PROCESS OF PROVIDING \$50 MILLION
FOR LONG-TERM RECOVERY PROGRAMS. IN SUM, WHILE THE DISCUSSIONS
WERE CHARACTERIZED BY SERIOUSNESS OF PURPOSE, THE MEETING

DID NOT MEET THE USG HOPE THAT THE REGIONAL MEETINGS WOULD PROVIDE GREATER DEFINITION TO THE ACTION PLAN BASED ON IDENTIFICATION OF SPECIAL PROBLEMS AND GOALS OF EACH REGION. SIMILARLY, THERE WAS LITTLE EFFORT TO INVENTORY ONGOING AND PLANNED ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE DESERTIFICATION FIELD BOTH WITHIN AND OUTSIDE THE UN SYSTEM. THE DELEGATION FROM BOTSWANA SUGGESTED, AND HIS SUGGESTION WILL APPEAR IN THE FINAL REPORT, THAT THE DELEGATIONS, UPON THEIR RETURN HOME, DISCUSS THE SUBJECT WITH APPROPRIATE MINISTRIES SO THAT REQUESTS FOR SPECIFIC ASSISTANCE COULD BE DEVELOPED WITH SOME IDEA OF THEIR COSTS. SUCH INFORMATION, HE SUGGESTED, SHOULD BE SENT TO THE CONFERENCE SECRETARIAT AS THE BASIS FOR FORMING GLOBAL ESTIMATES.

2. WITH RESPECT TO RECOMMENDATIONS 14 AND 15, PROPOSED INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS, PARTICIPANTS WERE DIVIDED, WITH SOME PROPOSING NO NEW INSTITUTIONS OR MECHANISMS AS APPROPRIATE MACHINERY ALREADY EXISTS IN THE UN SYSTEM. OTHERS SUPPORT THE CREATION OF A SPECIAL UNIT, POSSIBLY WITHIN UNEP.

3. ON FINANCING, THE SECRETARIAT EXPLAINED THAT THE CHAPTER IN THE PLAN OF ACTION WAS TENTATIVE AND WOULD BE SUPPLEMENTED BY A COMPREHENSIVE ANNEX FOLLOWING A MEETING OF FINANCIAL EXPERTS TO BE HELD THIS SPRING (PRESUMABLY THE APRIL 26-28 MEETING IN NEW YORK (REF B)). SOME 5 OR 6 DELEGATIONS CALLED FOR A RECOMMENDATION FOR THE CREATION OF A SPECIAL FUND TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION.

4. A POLITICAL NOTE WAS SOUNDED BY THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY
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GENERAL OF THE OAU, AMBASSADOR DJOUDI, WHO REFERRED TO THE FORMER COLONIAL POWERS IN AFRICA AND THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO DESERTIFICATION. (COMPARE THIS WITH THE STATEMENT OF THE EGYPTIAN DELEGATE WHO TRACED DESERTIFICATION IN EGYPT BACK TO THE TIME OF THE PHARAOHS.) THE OAU REP ALSO STATED THAT DESERTIFICATION WAS A PRODUCT OF CHEMICAL AND BIOLOGICAL WARFARE OF THE KIND THAT STILL EXISTS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA AND IN THIS CONNECTION HE MENTIONED DEFOLIATION IN VIETNAM (SIC), THE SCORCHED EARTH POLICY IN SOUTHWEST AFRICA, THE DEFOLIATION IN MOZAMBIQUE AND ANGOLA. A PROPOSAL BY BENIN FOR AN ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATION THAT WOULD REFER TO THE ROLE PLAYED BY BIOLOGICAL AND CHEMICAL WARFARE, PARTICULARLY WHERE LIBERATION ARMIES WERE FIGHTING IN SOUTHERN AFRICA RECEIVED SUPPORT FROM ALGERIA, THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE OAU, GUINEA BISSAU, UPPER VOLTA, MAURITANIA AND CAPE VERDE. ALL OTHER DELEGATIONS WERE SILENT. WE SHOULD, HOWEVER, EXPECT THAT A SIMILAR PROPOSAL WILL BE MADE AT THE MAIN CONFERENCE.

MARSHALL

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Message Attributes

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